

# WORLD DECLARATION ON NUTS AND DRIED FRUITS

We, the undersigned representatives of the global community, recognizing the critical challenges facing our planet in the fields of climate change, sustainability, and public health, hereby declare our commitment to promoting a better world through the increased consumption of nuts and dried fruits.

## NUTS AND DRIED FRUITS: A SUSTAINABLE CHOICE

### 1. Climate Mitigation:

Trees are a natural answer to climate change because of their ability to capture and store carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the principal greenhouse gas (GHG) emitted by humans. Nuts have some of the lowest carbon footprints because of their carbon sequestration capacity.<sup>1</sup> Agriculture is particularly vulnerable to climate change because of its dependency on weather and climatic conditions. The cultivation and production of nuts and dried fruits can be made more sustainable and resilient by increasing efficiency in the use of resources, improving water management practices, supporting circular economies, and strengthening human rights, all while meeting consumer demand for a healthy diet.

### 2. Biodiversity Conservation:

Nuts and fruits that grow in forests and agroforestry systems not only promote biodiversity conservation but also provide a life support system for local communities and economies. By choosing these products, consumers contribute to the preservation of natural habitats and the protection of endangered species. In the case of commercial crops, regenerative agriculture can help improve soil health and promote biodiversity while producing nutritious food profitably.

## NUTS AND DRIED FRUITS: A RESOURCE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

### 1. Nutrient-Rich Diets:

Unhealthy diets are one of the leading risk factors for the rising incidence of noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.<sup>2</sup> According to the World Health Organization, a healthy diet should include vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, and whole grains.<sup>3</sup> Including nuts and dried fruits in the daily diet supports overall health as they are nutrient-dense, they provide essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, and constitute an excellent means to deliver health-promoting bioactive compounds, which contributes to the prevention of non-communicable diseases.<sup>4,5</sup>

### 2. Addressing Malnutrition:

Creating a strong nutrition-enhancing food system is the most practical, convenient, and sustainable way to address malnutrition.<sup>6</sup> According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the focus should be on advice to increase the diversity of diets and include more vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, and whole grains.<sup>7,8</sup> Nuts and dried fruits, being nutrient-dense foods, can play a vital role in addressing malnutrition.<sup>9,10</sup>

By embracing the principles outlined in this declaration and advocating for the increased consumption of nuts and dried fruits, we affirm our commitment to building a more sustainable, resilient, and healthier world. Let this document serve as a call to action for individuals, communities, and nations to prioritize these wholesome foods, fostering a future where the global population thrives in harmony with the planet.

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<sup>1</sup>Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*, 360(6392), 987-992.

<sup>2</sup>World Health Organization. (2013, November 16). Noncommunicable diseases. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

<sup>3</sup>World Health Organization. (2020, April 29). Healthy diet. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

<sup>4</sup>Alasalvar, C., Salvadó, J. S., & Ros, E. (2020). Bioactives and health benefits of nuts and dried fruits. *Food chemistry*, 314, 126192.

<sup>5</sup>Bao, Y., Han, J., Hu, F. B., Giovannucci, E. L., Stampfer, M. J., Willett, W. C., & Fuchs, C. S. (2013). Association of nut consumption with total and cause-specific mortality. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 369(21), 2001-2011.

<sup>6</sup>FAO. (2013). Food systems for better nutrition. <https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/459874/>

<sup>7</sup>FAO. (2016). Plates, pyramids, planet. Developments in national healthy and sustainable dietary guidelines: a state of play assessment. FAO and the University of Oxford.

<sup>8</sup>FAO. (2019). Our actions are our future - Healthy diets for a #ZEROHUNGER world. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA5268EN>

<sup>9</sup>Ros, E. (2010). Health benefits of nut consumption. *Nutrients*, 2(7), 652-682.

<sup>10</sup>Alasalvar, C., Salvadó, J. S., & Ros, E. (2020). Bioactives and health benefits of nuts and dried fruits. *Food chemistry*, 314, 126192.



